

A NOVEL MATRIX METALLOPROTEINASE (MMP-25)  
EXPRESSED IN SKIN CELLS

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

This invention provides nucleic acids and polypeptides encoding a novel family of matrix metalloproteinases herein designated as MMP-25 and variants of the same. MMP-25 is preferentially expressed in skin cells of a mammal, particularly in breast cells and hair follicles. Expression in hair follicles is localized in the Henle layer of cells, indicating a role in hair growth. Also provided are fragments and oligonucleotides useful for identifying and isolating MMP-25-encoding nucleic acids and methods for their use, as well as antibodies that bind specifically to MMP-25 and vectors for expression of MMP-25 polypeptides. Methods of inhibiting MMP-25 activity are provided, including methods useful for inhibiting hair growth.

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